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The Family History of Kraig T. Westhoff

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The Family History of

Kraig T. Westhoff

25 April 2018

Kraig Thomas Westhoff authored this family history as part of the course requirements for HIST 550/700 Your Family in History offered online in Spring 2018 and was submitted to the Pittsburg State University [Digital Commons](#). Please contact the author directly with any questions or comments: kwesthoff85@gmail.com

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List of Direct Line Family Members**

Generation One

- A1. Kraig Thomas Westhoff (1987-)**
- A2. Lauren Elizabeth Westhoff (1990-)**

Generation Two

- A1a. Thomas James Westhoff (1951-)**
- A1b. Elizabeth Ann Duling Westhoff (1959-)**

Generation Three

- A1a1. John Richard Westhoff (1912-1994)**
- A1a2. Lorraine Marie Norris Westhoff (1925-2013)**

- A1b1. Thomas Edward Duling (1926-1992)**
- A1b2. Elizabeth Genevieve Fager Duling (1926-)**

Generation Four

- A1a1a. Franklin Adam Westhoff (1878-1960)**
- A1a1b. Margaret J. Trainor Westhoff (1883-1944)**

- A1a2a. James Leo Norris (1892-1963)**
- A1a2b. Leila P Inman Norris (1884-1983)**

- A1b1a. Thomas Francis Duling (1881-1981)**
- A1b1b. Mary May Hammer Duling (1900-1977)**

- A1b2a. James Henry Fager (1901-1981)**
- A1b2b. Genevieve Margarete Cragger Fager (1900-1972)**

Generation Five

- A1a1a1. James Westhoff (1837-1913)**
- A1a1a2. Mary Frances Stephan Westhoff (1836-1901)**

- A1a1b1. Richard Trainor (1838-1917)**
- A1a1b2. Mary Riley Trainor (1847-1905)**

- A1a2a1. Thomas Joseph Norris (1846-1931)**
- A1a2a2. Mary Abigail Dye Norris (1856-1933)**

- A1a2b1. Hiram Grant Inman (1869-1921)**
- A1a2b2. Lillie Mae Vradenburgh Inman (1869-1903)**

- A1b1a1. John F Duling (1857-1932)**
- A1b1a2. Kate E. McCarty Duling (1859-1945)**

- A1b1b1. Edward B Hammer (1868-1946)**
- A1b1b2. Rosa Mary Matter Hammer (1868-1956)**

- A1b2a1. William Fager (1860-1923)**
- A1b2a2. Sarah Bradshaw Fager (1866-1945)**

- A1b2b1. John Robert Cramer (1869-1959)**
- A1b2b2. Mary Jane Whalen Cramer (1868-1958)**

GENERATION ONE

Kraig Thomas Westhoff (1987-) was born at Fort Scott Mercy Hospital to **Thomas “Tom” James Westhoff (1951-)** and **Elizabeth “Beth” Ann Duling Westhoff (1959-)**. Kraig was the youngest of three children, with two older sisters **Kristin “Kristi” Dawn Westhoff Dillinger, (1982-)** and **Katie Lynn Westhoff Roberts (1984-)**. Kraig was born 12 days late, and as his mother was fond of saying this should have been seen as a sign of things to come¹.

The first home that the Westhoff's lived in as a family was a modest three-bedroom home that was rented, however only 6 months of Kraig's life was spent here as the next ten years of his life was spent growing up in Parsons, Kansas on Kimball Street. This house holds the earliest memories that Kraig can recall, growing up his family was a close and busy one his mother and father both worked full time, Beth, for Wal-Mart in Parsons, and Tom, for the Army Ammunition plant and later the Kansas State Hospital in Parsons. The earliest memory Kraig can recall is sitting on the side of the road on the bench seat of Tom's two-toned blue and white GMC Sierra, as Tom was working on his CB radio, and explaining how the radio worked and how he was trying to fix it.

The house on Kimball had a huge backyard where hours were spent by all three children playing tag, swimming, jumping on the trampoline, walking on a frozen pool, playing with the family dog, and climbing in the treehouse built just for them. The building of the tree house is also a source of a disputed moment of family history. During construction, Katie and Kraig wished to help in the building of the tree house, and as it

¹ Personal knowledge of the author, Kraig T. Westhoff.

tends to happen between older and younger siblings, a disagreement broke out between them over who would be allowed to use the toy gun belt, that was currently holding a wrench. As the argument escalated, Katie became frustrated and threw the belt, with wrench in a holster, towards Kraig, striking him in the head. The memories of this event afterward are vague at best for Kraig, but the family recounts spending time ensuring Kraig was okay, other than a scar and slight indentation that remained in his skull. Katie maintains that she did not intentionally throw the wrench at his head, but he disagrees. In Claude S. Fischer's book *Made in America: A Social History of American Culture and Character*, the author speaks of the economic security that Americans were able to enjoy, and how that factors in to the overall feelings of security that Americans have in the late twentieth century and how that had been replaced with other forms of insecurity². Minor sibling violence excluded, the Westhoff's had a safe and secure home, that even with times of unemployment of one parent allowed the family to be members of the American dream.

The Roman Catholic Church played in huge role in the life of the Westhoff family, all three children attended what is now St. Patrick's Catholic School, and attended weekly Mass at Mary Queen of Peace, until this parish was closed and combined with St. Patrick's Parish in 1995. In figure 8.9 of their book, *Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years*, authors Fischer and Hout show the attendance at religious services, by year and denomination. In this graph they show the attendance rates for Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish Churches from the 1950s to the 2000s, Protestant and Jewish faiths show an ebb and flow with small increases throughout the years, but the Catholic Church shows a huge decline in attendance rates from a high of nearly seventy-five

² Claude S. Fischer, *Made in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 8-9.

percent in the early 1950s to almost thirty-five percent by the year 2000. This decline saw its largest drop from around 1970 to 1990, according to Hout and Fischer, one-third of regularly attending Catholics who were attending stopped between 1962 and 1975³.

For the Westhoff Family this meant a loss of the original Church, Mary Queen of Peace in 1995. With fewer numbers of Catholics attending Mass services regularly in the United States from the 1960s to the new millennium, Parsons was in line with this trend as well and the town could not support the two Parishes.

In 1996 Kraig's parents became dissatisfied with the education that his oldest sister was receiving at Parsons Middle school and both sisters began attending St. Paul Schools, in St. Paul, Kansas. For the first year of the girl's attendance at St. Paul, Tom would drop them off at a bus stop, near the Twin Cemeteries outside of Parsons, then drive back to the house, and take Kraig to the Catholic school. In 1997, the Westhoff family made the decision to move out of Parsons and to find a place in the country, eventually three acres of land was purchased, five miles from Eire, and five miles from St. Paul, and new home was built. The family moved in in the summer of 1997, and Kraig spent the next eight years living on the small farm participating in 4-H, and FFA. After finishing fifth grade Kraig began attending St. Paul Schools with his sisters, riding the bus every morning, he was not able to ride with his sisters because they would have early morning practices for various sports. Some of the highlights of his high school years are winning the 2002 8-Man State Football Championship , participating in a USO program done on Veterans Day, where over the years he portrayed Gomer Pyle in a skit, and Ulysses Everett McGill from, O' Brother Where

³ Claude S. Fischer and Michael Hout, *Century of Difference: How America Changed in the Last One Hundred Years* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2006), 205.

Art Thou?”. during the same time Kraig’s family began to expand, his older sister Kristi married **Wade Donald Dillinger (1972-)** in the summer of 2003, and their first child was born in the spring of 2004, and a second child being born in 2006. Kraig and Katie were both made the godparents of each of these children. These were only the first of seven nieces and nephews that Kraig is the uncle of. Upon graduation in 2005, Kraig decided to pursue higher education, through a friend he was able to secure a scholarship to Coffeyville Community College to study Athletic Training. After completing his time at Coffeyville Community College, Kraig moved on to Wichita State University to continue studying athletic training, while there Kraig realized two things: he did not like Wichita State University, and he was not a fan of living in Wichita so far away from friends and other members of his family besides his sister Katie. After one semester of attending Wichita State University, the decision was made to transfer to Pittsburg State University, in Pittsburg, Kansas. Beginning attendance in the fall of 2008, he began studying for his bachelor’s Degree in Education with an emphasis on History and Government. At Pitt State he lived with two childhoods friends and made new lifelong friends that continued to have a deep impact on his life for years to come. In the Fall of 2009 Katie married **Brice Adam Roberts (1982-)**, and they had three children.

While attending PSU Kraig began working at Jock's Nitch Sporting Goods, a local sporting goods retailer that has been in operation in the Pittsburgh area since the 1970s. Kraig worked here for an over a year, before failing to show up one morning to open the store resulted in his being fired. At the time he was very angry at this, but then began to realize that his own mistakes had caused this problem, and it was the fault of no one else’s.

This realization helped him to grow up and realize that the choices he made have real consequences, and he would have to live with those.

He was soon hired at Radio Shack, the destination that many people would go for various electronic gadgets. Electronics and other newer technologies had always been a hobby and working in a store that had nothing but the newest and sleekest technology to offer Pittsburg made this a great place to work. Due to the rapid growth of Amazon and other online retailers, Radio Shack was the store for help, and all the little gizmos that were just fun to have, Americans love of the newest and best items is another theme that Fischer touches on in *Made in America*, as another wholly American tradition⁴.

In the fall of 2011 Kraig completed his teacher education program at Pittsburg State, and spent the semester as a student teacher at Girard High School. This was his first experience in the classroom, and while nervous and apprehensive he thoroughly enjoyed being in the classroom. During this professional semester he was given an opportunity to volunteer with Girard's Junior High Football program as an assistant coach, something he had hoped to do. Kraig was awarded a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Pittsburg State University in December of 2011, and spent the spring of 2012 preparing his resume to find a job as a teacher. To keep living in Pittsburg with his friends, and to avoid moving back in with his parents, he began working at Hastings book store in Pittsburg Kansas, a store that fed into his lifelong addictions to books, movies, and all things pop culture. This is another chain that has since gone bankrupt and out of business partly due to competition from Starbucks, Netflix, and Amazon. Kraig was a manager of the cafe as a

⁴ Fischer, *Made in America*, 8-9.

barista, feeding another lifelong addiction to coffee, alongside substitute teaching at Girard High School.

The summer of 2012 was not a good time for a new teacher be looking for a job, applications were filed for over fifty different teaching jobs, of those he went on 24 different interviews for history teaching positions throughout the state of Kansas, and due to a lack of experience, was not hired for any of them. One of these interviews give rise to a new legend of family history. At the time Kraig had a very unreliable vehicle that would not likely to make the trip to Lawrence, Kansas. Kristi kindly offered to drive Kraig to his interview, at this time it is also appropriate to mention that all members of the Westhoff family are die-hard fans of the Kansas Jayhawks, Kristi especially had an immense love for the Coach of the Jayhawks, Bill Self. Arriving in town over an hour before the actual interview, and with her passenger being extremely nervous, Kristi decided the best course of action would be to drive around the city and roll down the window to ask random people on the street if they knew where Bill Self's house was located, or if they knew Coach Self. Kristi was later able to meet Bill Self twice, taking her two oldest children to a basketball ball camp put on by the Jayhawks.

In the fall of 2012 Kraig was able to secure a position as a graduate assistant student in the elementary education department at Pittsburg State University. The work he was doing at this time was very fulfilling, but he felt that he could be doing so much more in the classroom. He would soon get exactly what he wanted, and with this a reminder for him to be careful what he wished for. A job fair held on the campus of PSU in November of 2012 put him in contact with representatives of the Kansas City Missouri Public School district, and they had an opening. An interview was granted right on the spot, and Kraig was

informed that he would be contacted soon about an opening at the Paseo Arts Academy, and Kraig was thrilled, but his hopes would soon be dashed. The job at Paseo had been filled, but there was another opening at The Central Academy of Excellence teaching seventh grade Social Studies. He agreed to take this position and moved to Independence, Missouri, in January of 2013.

Upon the first day teaching at Central, Kraig quickly realized two things: one, he did not have anything in common with his mostly urban, African American students, and two, they did not wish to connect with a country kid from Kansas. The first two months were a struggle for Kraig and he began to lean heavily on his father for support, and advice. At least once a day during this period Kraig would call or talk to his father and found great comfort in his father helping him through this time. Even with that aide he still began to suffer from anxiety related to his work, suffering a full-blown panic attack in March of that year. His biggest fear was that he was not connecting with his students and was not the type of educator he wanted to be. Slowly he began to learn more about his students and started to work harder to find ways to motivate and connect to them, unfortunately not all of them were successful. With the help of his coworkers and other support staff, he made it to the end of the year and was offered a contract for a full school year, which he turned down. Another opportunity closer to home had presented itself to him and with homesickness, and tired of living in a small apartment in independence, Kraig accepted a job teaching Sixth and Seventh Grade Social Studies at Fredonia Middle School in Fredonia Kansas.

The position at Fredonia also included a position as an assistant football coach, a job Kraig had wanted since coaching in Girard. For two years he made new friends and built

relationships that had him considering long term plans in Fredonia, but decisions outside of his control, forced another change. In 2012 the Kansas legislature decided to pass historic tax cuts in the state, three years later in 2015, to help keep the State Government budget balanced, funding for schools was cut. When those cuts hit Fredonia, it resulted in a history position being cut, and the Kraig along with it.

On Mother's Day in 2015 Kraig received a call from the principal of the Fowler School District in Fowler, Kansas, the previous Friday he had interviewed for an open position in the small Southwest Kansas town, and they were now offering it to him. Fowler is located thirty-five miles south west of Dodge City, located on Highway 54, roughly six hours from his family home in Erie. The family discussion that day was based around whether Kraig should take the job, with a final verdict coming from Beth, saying that unless he had other offers, and if he felt like he could handle it that he should take the job at Fowler. He accepted the position the following Monday.

In June of 2015 upon moving into his new home he was informed by his principal that he was also being named the new head football coach, a position for which he did not apply, but he jumped right in and began trying to put a team together in time for the season. After two months of living in a town of less than three-hundred people, he also quickly realized that the dating pool was almost as dry as the land around him. Like many Americans have done in the digital age he decided to use the internet to interact and meet new people, three days after signing up for a dating account he sent a message to a girl who was also a teacher in a nearby school district. Nearby in southwest Kansas means less than two hours away. They chatted for about a day through the website, and after Kraig asked

for a date she replied that since the State of Kansas had already done a background check, that she felt comfortable going on a date with him.

Kraig met **Lauren Elizabeth Harvey Westhoff (1990-)** for the first time at an Applebee's in Liberal, Kansas for a first date that had many memorable moments. The poor waitress on this evening witnessed many awkward moments as the two settled in to get to know one another. Lauren was born in Hawaii, on a military base, and grew up in Mount Vernon, Ohio, a medium sized city that is the county seat of Knox County, home to the Woodward Opera house, the oldest of its kind, and in the rust belt of American Manufacturing, having lost a Rolls-Royce plant in the early part of the 2000s⁵. Kraig's only response after hearing Ohio was to say "Oh." after which he tried to cover up by saying he meant the state's abbreviation. For whatever reason Lauren laughed at this, and they spent the next seven hours talking at a bowling alley, not even bothering to get shoes.

Lauren had graduated near the top of her class in 2008 and had chosen to go to college at Oklahoma Panhandle State University in beautiful Guymon, Oklahoma, where she had double Bachelor's Degrees in Biology, and Animal Science, after working as an Extension Agent in Colorado, she enrolled in a Transition to Teach program and was the Science teacher at Moscow High School in Moscow, Kansas. Kraig and Lauren married in June of 2017 and moved to Topeka in June of 2018, their first child was born in August of 2018.

⁵ Wikipedia. "Mount Vernon, Ohio." Accessed January 31, 2018.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Vernon,_Ohio

GENERATION TWO

A1a. Thomas James Westhoff (1951-)

A1b. Elizabeth Ann Duling Westhoff (1959-)

Tom Westhoff was born on in Parsons, Kansas to **John Richard “John R” Westhoff (1912-1994)** and **Lorraine Marie Norris Westhoff (1925-2013)** . Tom was the fifth child to John R, and the fourth to Lorraine. In total he has fourteen brothers and sisters who he has been in constant contact with throughout his entire life⁶. The Westhoff home was located on the city limits of Walnut, Kansas, where it still stands today, and has been the sight of numerous family gatherings both happy and sad since the 1940s. In town the Westhoff children attend St. Patrick’s Catholic School, the parish school for the now closed Catholic Church in walnut Kansas. Tom remembers being in frequent trouble with the sisters who ran the school and deciding to run away one day only to have his Mother send him back to school upon his return home. Living in the house until his passing was Toms grandfather **Franklin Adam Westhoff (1878-1960)** , who was a carpenter. Growing up in a large house Tom was close to all his siblings, but he was closest to **Ronald Eugene “Ronnie” Westhoff (1952-1973)**. Other family members over the years have told that while growing up Tom and Ronnie had to share a bed and most mornings they would find Ronnie with his fingers twirled in Tom’s hair⁷. In July of 1969 Tom was driving across the county with his oldest sister **Virginia Louise “Ginger” Westhoff (1941-)** helping her move items across the country, while stopping in Utah, he watched the moon landing. Tom

⁶ Westhoff, Thomas. Interview by Kraig Westhoff. Personal Interview. Erie, Kansas, March 30, 2018.

⁷ Personal knowledge of the author, Kraig T. Westhoff.

attended Girard High School from 1966-1970 while there he participated in football, track, and basketball; lettering in all three sports. After graduation Tom began working for his father's construction company, but as tensions were increasing overseas he began to be worried about the draft. His oldest brother **Bernard Francis "Greasy" Westhoff (1946-)** had previously served in the United States Navy, and his father had served in World War Two as a tail gunner. His greatest fear was being sent over to Vietnam, being from a family that had so many young men already in it, Tom had a very high draft number, and he decided to take action to ensure that he would not have to go to South Asia.

In January, 1971 he enlisted in the United States Air Force, attending Basic Training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, and became a Petrol Fuels and Lubricants Specialist, rising to the rank of an E-4 Sergeant. At the end of his training Tom received his first posting, and it wasn't the one he wished to have, despite his best efforts he was being sent to Vietnam. Phan Rang Air Base was built in 1942 by the Imperial Japanese Army, it was then used by France in the Indochina war before being abandoned in 1954, The United States rebuilt the base in 1965 and began using it for tactical operations during the Vietnam Conflict, US troops began a final withdraw from the base in 1971-1972, and it was taken over by the Vietnam People's Air force in 1975⁸.

The time spent serving in Vietnam is not a topic Tom spends a large amount of time dwelling on, the few times he has talked about has mostly been passing, one story he has shared involved something he said you do while you are in the service, volunteer. During his service an officer came to his unit and asked for 4 volunteers for a special assignment,

⁸ Wikipedia. "Phan Rang Air Base." Accessed April 5, 2018.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phan_Rang_Air_Base

details would not be given, and the men had to volunteer. With three of his service mates with him, Tom made the decision, that it would be better to get it over with, to spare others from whatever this task would be and raised his hand. Along with the other brave souls he was placed on a transport, and shown into a hall, filled with other service members, a stage, and Bob Hope. As it would happen Tom got to go to a program put on by the USO and for once never regretted volunteering for duty.

Tom was next sent to Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. This time he remembers fondly, but few details were shared, he returned home in 1973 but it was not for a happy occasion. Ronnie had been killed in a vehicle accident, and Tom returned home for the funeral, a dark time for the entire family Tom was especially hit hard, and still has a hard time when talking about the topic.

In 1974 he received his final assignment with the Air Force serving at Altus Air Force Base in Oklahoma, and in January of 1975 reached the end of his enlistment and was honorably discharged from the military. Returning home, he went to work for his Father's construction company, then began working for Churchill Oil Field service of Chanute in maintenance. During this time, he began hanging around the farm of **Thomas Edward Duling (1926-1992)** and began dating his daughter Beth.

Elizabeth was born in Parsons, Kansas to Tomas Duling, and **Elizabeth Genevieve Fager Duling (1926-)** the fifth of eight children Beth was from another large Catholic family, and attended school in St. Paul, Kansas. Her early years consisted mainly of cooking cleaning, and helping her mother with house work, while her father and brothers took care of the day to day chores that existed on the farm. There is still some debate over who the better cook is but, certain household opinions weigh the scales in favor of Beth over her

other sisters. While in high school Beth and her sisters were not allowed to play sports, though they were offered, her father just didn't think it was necessary for the girls to drive the twelve miles to and from school for after school activities, but the boys were allowed to participate⁹. Beth still was active in her school, she was the Secretary of the Pep Club, active in 4-H, and participated in CYO, Catholic Youth Organization, at St. Francis Church in St. Paul. The family lived a simple life, never going on trips or other extravagances, other than trips to El Dorado, Kansas, to visit her grandparents, **Thomas Francis Duling (1881-1981)** and **Mary May Hammer Duling (1900-1977)**, this trip with a picnic on the way was considered vacation for the family. Her mother's parents, **James Henry Fager (1901-1981)** and **Genevieve Margarete Crager Fager (1900-1972)** lived thirty miles from the family, but visits between the groups happened frequently, one happening on July, 20th 1969, after watching the moon landing, she remembers being outside and her grandfather looking and pointing up at the moon saying how he could not believe that men were on it.

Growing up on the farm and living in the age of television most historical events of this time are juxtaposed with her daily life and chores, when Robert Kennedy was assassinated on June 5th, in 1968, she remembers picking out chicks in the barnyard, for an Irish Catholic family that voted Democrat this was a great tragedy. Six years later in August of 1974, she remembers getting items ready to take to the County Fair only for her mother to call down for them to come look at the television, as President Richard Nixon announced his resignation to the United States.

Beth would also be featured in her own television moment as well, KODE a local ABC affiliate in Joplin, Missouri, hosted a program known as "Teen Hop" where teenagers from

⁹ Westhoff, Elizabeth. Interview by Kraig Westhoff. Personal Interview. Erie, Kansas, March 30, 2018.

local high schools would participate in a dance contest, according to Beth very much like American Bandstand with Dick Clark. In January of 1974, in what is described as a carload of kids left St. Paul, and were featured on the show, paired up and read for competition, she had no expectations of winning, but after surviving the cuts she had won! To celebrate the kids then went to the newly built NorthPark Mall, to eat went to see the now classic film The Sting, starring Robert Redford, and Paul Newman. Unfortunately, when the time came for the multi school competition the Beth had qualified for, she was unable to attend, she and her partner were unable to drive, and no one could give them a ride.

Beth attended St. Paul high School from 1973-1977. During her senior year of high school, Beth and her mother began working at St. Paul Manor, a retirement home, mother and daughter worked in the kitchen, Beth would work weekends, and was able to get of school at noon on Thursday, and Fridays to cook in the kitchen with her mother. While driving home from work on August 17th in 1977 she couldn't understand why every radio station was playing nothing but Elvis songs the entire day, until the DJ came over the radio to announce the King of Rock n' Roll had died. It was during this time that tom began coming around the farm, and the two began dating, on October 18th, 1977, at St. Patrick's Church in Walnut, Kansas Tom and Beth were married.

In Figure 5.6 "Occupational Distribution of the Economically Active Population: Age Twenty-Five to Sixty-Four," Fischer and Hoult look at the growth of White Collar jobs as farming and farming jobs disappeared. To do this the authors broke down the economically active population into four different categories; Farmers, and Farm Laborers, Blue-Collar and Service Workers, Professional Clerical and Sales Workers, and Finally Managers and Proprietors. Each graph shows the percentage of workers in each of these industries and

shows either the rate of growth from 1900 to 200, or its rate of decline¹⁰. Tom and Beth's family took part in this trend as well, his mother's family were farmers dating back to their arrival in the United States, but in his mother's generation only three brothers would remain on the farm and then only part time. Thomas Duling was the last Duling to make farming his full-time profession. The Westhoff side however began to embrace economic change earlier, in the 1960's John R., joined the 10% of Americans who were proprietors of their own business, operating a construction company in Walnut, Kansas. Tom entered the workforce as a skilled manual laborer, working for Churchill Oil Pump company of Chanute, Kansas. After working this job, he later began working for the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant, in Parsons, before being laid off in the early 1990's. After a year of working various odd construction jobs, he was hired as a warehouseman at Parson State Hospital, and held this position for five years, before becoming the head of transportation, retiring from that position in 2016. As Tom was working for various companies and experiencing unsteady employment, Beth was working for Walmart in Parsons, Kansas. Starting as a department manager in 1980 she was working full time as an assistant manager for the store in 1988. While not the same level or path that professionals would expect, the income she made was enough to support her young family, and weather the storm of the uncertain economy facing South Eastern Kansas in the early 1990's.

One of the goals that both Beth and Tom had for their children was for them to receive a good education, Beth never attended school past high school, and tom had an Associate degree in mathematics from Labette County Community College in 1980, they

¹⁰ Fischer and Hout, *Century of Difference*, 109.

wanted to push all three of their children to do well academically. Tom was able to take advantage of the GI Bill program to further his education, in figure 2.3 of Fischer and Hout showing the rise, of high school, and college graduation rates looking at race and gender as well. In this graph the number of graduates from college in the United States expanded greatly due to the use of the GI Bill for veterans, and other grant and loan programs. Overall in the United States there was a huge increase in not only the number of college graduates in the country, but diffusion from the higher classes to the lower classes as well¹¹. The Westhoff children would become a part of this, due to the expansion and increase of these programs designed to help more people get to college.

Tom also wanted his children to participate in athletics, all the children took place in youth sports leagues, from baseball to soccer, and football. Tom even coached his two oldest daughters in third and fourth grade basketball, but due to a confluence of events that included, Kristi and Katie, lighting all the candles in the Westhoff household, setting a mattress on fire, Tom had decided to give up his smoking habit, with a particularly bad referee at a game, resulted in Tom making the decision that coaching his children may not be the best avenue for him to enjoy his children's athletic events. Both daughters would go on to excel in basketball, with Kristi and Katie both earning college scholarships, to Neosho County Community College, and Katie going on to play at Newman University in Wichita, Kansas. Kraig while not the most athletic of the three children played football, and was encouraged by Tom to keep working hard, was able to receive a scholarship to Coffeyville Community college, in athletic training, propelled by his father's love of sports. Very rarely

¹¹ Fischer and Hout, *Century of Difference*, 15.

did Tom or Beth miss any of their children's games, being a constant presence in the stands to cheer on their children, Beth's father always made it a point to attend all his grand children's games, to show his support for them as well.

Beth also made sure the children had memories to look back on, every summer she did everything in her power to make sure that the family would go on a family vacation. Branson, Missouri, being the most frequently visited destination for vacations, the family spent hours together attending shows, going to Silver Dollar City, and enjoying, or dreading time in the car with one another. The longest trip the family went on was to Orlando, Florida, in 1992 for a family trip to Walt Disney World.

Thomas Duling was always a constant figure in the Westhoff's children lives, and the whole family took many trips, almost once a week, to the Duling farm in rural Neosho County. along with cousins the children spent time with their grandparents, and were able to see farm life, ride horses, and check cattle with their grandfather. Kraig especially is grateful for the hours he was able to spend with his grandfather riding around in his farm truck talking with his grandfather and listening to old country songs on the scratchy A.M. radio.

Loss, unfortunately, is not foreign to the Westhoff household, the hardest loss for the family was the loss of Carter Roberts in February of 2018.

Carter was born in July of 2011, Carter was the first-born child of Brice and Katie, and the third godson of Kraig. In May of 2017, Carter was diagnosed with a rare form of brain cancer known as Diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma, or DIPG. DIPG is currently an incurable form of childhood cancer that affects young boys and girls from the ages of 6

months to 10 years old. Carter was 6 when diagnosed. Carter was lucky enough to get the last spot in a clinical trial at St. Jude's Children Research Hospital in Memphis Tennessee. Carter went through hell at 6 years old. From flying in an airplane to make it to his Uncle Kraig's wedding, to getting to meet, and be present at a shoot around with the Kansas University Jayhawks, Carter got to see more of the world and experience more as a 7-year-old child, than most do all their lives. "Carter Tough" became a rallying cry for strength for him and his families' community. In January of 2018, Carter was back at St. Jude's, the treatment given to him by the doctors was ineffective, and Carter was given 3 months maximum to live. Carter went home, and on February 11th, he passed away, with his Mother, Father, and Grandparents from both sides there to comfort him. Carter was stronger than any 7-year-old had any right to be, and we are blessed to have known him, and heartbroken to have lost him. Fischer talks about Americans being enamored with their own resilience, Kraig was in awe, and admired his sisters resilience¹². She is strong only because she has no other choice, and because of that we all must be strong as well.

¹² Fischer, *Made in America*, 8-9.

GENERATION THREE

A1a1. John Richard Westhoff (1912-1994)

A1a2. Lorraine Marie Norris Westhoff (1925-2013)

A1b1. Thomas Edward Duling (1926-1992)

A1b2. Elizabeth Genevieve Fager Duling (1926-)

John R. Westhoff was born in Clovis, New Mexico, in 1912 to **Franklin Adam Westhoff (1878-1960)** and **Margaret J. Trainor Westhoff (1883-1944)** Clovis is home to the Clovis Culture, a collection archaeological sites, believed to be the remains of one of the first indigenous peoples of the United States, the city itself was established as both a switch and hub for workers of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad¹³. Franklin has been said in family interviews to be a carpenter, working in a newly established town one could see the need to have a carpenter present to help in the building of homes and businesses, however by 1920, Franklin had left New Mexico with his family and returned to Walnut, Kansas¹⁴. As a side note, in interviews with members of the family, and in talks about him concerning family events, he has always been referred to as John R exclusively, during the petitions at his funeral, given by Beth Westhoff, she made sure to say John R. when praying for his soul, a note his daughters found touching¹⁵. John R. would not have spent much time in Clovis, but his time in Kansas especially his adult years is remarkable. In 1941 he married **Martha Lorraine Briley Westhoff (1918-1941)** only to have her pass

¹³ Wikipedia. "Clovis, New Mexico." Accessed January 29, 2018.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clovis,_New_Mexico

¹⁴ "United States Census, 1920," database with images, *FamilySearch*

(<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MF6Q-XF7> : accessed 22 April 2018), F A Westhoff, Walnut, Crawford, Kansas, United States; citing ED 111, sheet 1B, line 100, family 23, NARA microfilm publication T625 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), roll 529; FHL microfilm 1,820,529.

¹⁵ Westhoff, Elizabeth. Interview by Kraig Westhoff. Personal Interview. Erie, Kansas, March 30, 2018.

away that same year, giving birth to one daughter Virginia. In 1946 he married his wife of 48 years Lorraine and had thirteen more children. After the passing of Martha, John joined the United States Army Air Force Serving as a tail gunner, in the European theater of World War Two John R. would later begin working in construction, a common theme with his father Franklin a carpenter, and his grandfather **James Westhoff (1837-1913)** as builders, or men who worked with their hands. While working in construction John R. took part in building the Alcan Highway in Alaska and Canada, and with the construction of the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant in Parsons, Kansas. in 1958 he also opened his own company The Westhoff Construction Company, which employed many of his sons. At the same time John R was also an active member of the Walnut Fire department, serving as its chief from 1956 to 1994. John R. fully retired from construction in 1981. He also was active member in St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Walnut, and a Fourth Degree Knight, in The Knights of Columbus¹⁶. An organization to which his son Tom, and grandson Kraig both belong to.

Lorraine Westhoff was born in November of 1925 to **James Leo Norris (1892-1963)** and **Leila P Inman Norris (1884-1983)** in Erie, Kansas, no details have been found about her early life growing up, and she spent most of life caring for the fourteen children in her and John R.'s household. All members of the family do agree that Lorraine was witty, smart, and feisty. Her sense of humor was visible throughout all her life, most likely from dealing with fourteen very strong willed and minded children. She would also take great pleasure in watching her grandchildren play sports at St. Paul High School, a fixture in the

¹⁶ *Find A Grave*, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 23 April 2018), memorial page for John R Westhoff (15 Sep 1912–13 Nov 1994), Find A Grave Memorial no. [72004045](#), citing Saint Patrick's Catholic Cemetery, Walnut, Crawford County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by RBruchez (contributor [47064355](#)).

stands at every game. Lorraine is well remembered by all her children, as the rock of her family. In her later years she began to suffer from dementia and had a very hard time in recognizing her grandchildren and was confused very easily. In the late nineties in order to help her with the management of her diabetes and other issues her children took turns in spending the night with their mother. Unfortunately, her symptoms worsened, and a difficult decision was made to place her in the care of Prairie Mission Retirement Village where she was still visited by her children, and provided the staff with many moments of laughter, as she was still not one to be bossed around. She passed away in August of 2013¹⁷.

Thomas Edward Duling was born in 1926 in Walnut, Kansas to **Thomas Francis Duling (1881-1981)** and **Mary May Hammer Duling (1900-1977)**. Thomas spent his life as a farmer and a stockman, raising cattle and tending to a large garden in his backyard¹⁸. With his wife Betty, Thomas raised eight children, and countless number of cattle. After spending his day working, Thomas would go on long walks in the acreage surrounding his home, and on country roads, often with his dogs, or a grandchild with him. Thomas was very proud of his grandchildren and would take them with him on chores whenever they were around, he gave many grandchildren as young as nine driving lessons in his old farm truck, a practice Betty forced him to stop, after one of them flipped the truck over during a lesson. A man of great faith Thomas never missed church, even when he was laid up with broken ribs. Visits

¹⁷ *Find A Grave*, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 25 April 2018), memorial page for Lorraine Martha *Norris* Westhoff (2 Nov 1925–6 Aug 2013), Find A Grave Memorial no. [115019888](#), citing Saint Patrick's Catholic Cemetery, Walnut, Crawford County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Forever Searching † (contributor [47578585](#)) .

¹⁸ *Find A Grave*, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 25 April 2018), memorial page for Thomas E. "Tom" Duling (4 Feb 1926–17 Mar 1999), Find A Grave Memorial no. [9910492](#), citing Saint Patrick's Catholic Cemetery, Walnut, Crawford County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by Barb J "John 3:16" (contributor [46619619](#)) .

to the farm would never be complete until Thomas drove in from working cattle for either breakfast, lunch, or dinner, and would stop at the well pump the always had the same chipped blue enamel cup hooked in its handle, vivid memories of him stopping to fill, clean out, and then fill and take a drink of the cup always stick out in the minds of his grandchildren. Playing checkers was another pastime that Thomas would engage in, playing the game for hours with his grandson Kraig, always helping make the right move, but never letting him win. Every day he would wear a pair of Key overalls while out working chores, only changing when he would go to town to watch his grand children's sporting events, or to go to church. Thomas passed away on March 17, 1999, from an infection from surgery. He is greatly missed.

Betty Duling was born in 1926 to **James Henry Fager (1901-1981)** and **Genevieve Margarette Crager Fager (1900-1972)** in McCune, Kansas. Betty remembers having to wake up early each morning to help her mother bake bread, a tradition she carried on for many years, walk about a mile down the road to school every morning where she was out by two o'clock, and would then go home and help with the cooking and the cleaning and the mending that took place on a daily basis around her family farm. Betty was one of thirteen children, with five not surviving past a year old. With this hanging, over her families' head life must have been tough. She also recalls that growing up was not easy and that everybody was expected to work and pull their weight and remembers riding horses to help bring cattle on more than one occasion. She married Thomas in 1953, and they had eight children together, while he was working on the farm, she made sure that her children were clothed fed and ready for school, having the girls help with cooking, and cleaning, and her boys out to help their father on the farm.

In school Betty excelled in Home Economics, today known as Family and Consumer Sciences, and the only bad grade she received in that class was knitting, however sewing, and cooking were her two strongest areas¹⁹. Betty's skill in the kitchen was unparalleled, and meals made and served at her table were cherished by all who would come including the grandchildren. She always made sure that she had her cookie jar filled, root beer in the fridge, and cherry Jell-O, with bananas served in sundae glasses for unexpected, or expected visits. What Betty was best known for however where her pies, know family gathering would be complete without a chocolate pie made from scratch by Grandma on the table, and she was widely known to trade yard work and labor for pies.

After the passing of Thomas, she spent two more years living in the farmhouse before making the decision to move into town, to be closer to her friends, and not to live so far out from her daughters. Her home in St. Paul has been the site of new family meetings, including weekly visits from great grandchildren, and card tournaments, and meetings with friends.

¹⁹ Duling, Elizabeth. Interview by Kraig Westhoff. Personal Interview. St. Paul, Kansas, April 15, 2018.

GENERATION FOUR

A1a1a. Franklin Adam Westhoff (1878-1960)

A1a1b. Margaret J. Trainor Westhoff (1883-1944)

A1a2a. James Leo Norris (1892-1963)

A1a2b. Leila P Inman Norris (1884-1983)

A1b1a. Thomas Francis Duling (1881-1981)

A1b1b. Mary May Hammer Duling (1900-1977)

A1b2a. James Henry Fager (1901-1981)

A1b2b. Genevieve Margarete Crager Fager (1900-1972)

Franklin "Frank" Adam Westhoff was born in 1878 to **James Westhoff (1837-1913)** and **Mary Frances Stephan Westhoff (1836-1901)** in Crawford County, Kansas. Very little information appears for Frank's early life except mentions of living in his father's house in both the 1880²⁰, and 1900²¹ US Census. In 1903 Frank married Margaret Trainor²². At some point, in the years before 1918 Frank and Margaret moved to St. Vrain, New Mexico²³. While in New Mexico, Frank's name appears in several newspaper notices

²⁰ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MFP5-25C> : 29 August 2017), Frank Westhoff in household of James Westhoff, Grant, Crawford, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district ED 56, sheet 59C, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), roll 0378; FHL microfilm 1,254,378.

²¹ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MMT6-GBT> : accessed 24 April 2018), Franklin A Westhoff in household of James Westhoff, Walnut Township Walnut city, Crawford, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 92, sheet 13B, family 273, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,477.

²² "Kansas County Marriages, 1855-1911," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939J-T87G-N?cc=1851040&wc=QZPV-RWZ%3A166160201%2C166473401> : 16 February 2016), Crawford > Marriage records, 1902-1903, v. Q > image 273 of 319; citing district clerk, court clerk, county clerk and register offices from various counties.

²³ "United States Census, 1910," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33S7-9RJP-9HRF?cc=1727033&wc=QZZ7-C59%3A133638501%2C134042301%2C134110701%2C1589089014> : 24 June 2017), New Mexico > Curry > Saint Vrain > ED 57 > image 14 of 16; citing NARA microfilm publication T624 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.).

witnessing land claims in the area²⁴. Even though Frank was absent in these years the Westhoff name was still active in Southeast Kansas, a report from The Topeka State Journal on July ,30, over the results and going ons of the Kansas State League Baseball organization, mentions the last name of Westhoff, no first name provided, a pitcher who had recently been on a team from Pittsburg, making his debut for a Junction City team²⁵. This may have been one of his brothers or other relative. According to Tom Westhoff, Frank was a carpenter by trade, but on census records from this period and later he either list is occupation as none, or as farmer. While in New Mexico they couple had John R., but soon had moved back to Kansas. In 1918 at the age of 40 years old, Frank registered for the draft during First World War²⁶. Frank spent the rest of his life living in Walnut, Kansas, and according to Tom Westhoff, moved in with John R. and his family for the last years of life passing away in 1960²⁷.

Margaret was born to **Richard Trainor (1838-1917)** and **Mary Riley Trainor (1847-1905)** in Kansas, with Frank she had seven children. In 1895 Kansas held a state census in which Maggie, as she was known on the documents, was living with her parents

²⁴ The Clovis news. (Clovis, N.M.), 21 March 1912. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn93061777/1912-03-21/ed-1/seq-5/>>

²⁵ *The Topeka state journal*. (Topeka, Kan.), 30 July 1909. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn82016014/1909-07-30/ed-1/seq-2/>>

²⁶ "United States World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:33SQ-G1H6-B5X?cc=1968530&wc=9FC5-6TG%3A928311101%2C928404401> : 14 May 2014), Kansas > Crawford County no 1; V-Z > image 486 of 626; citing NARA microfilm publication M1509 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.).

²⁷ *Find A Grave*, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 25 April 2018), memorial page for Franklin Adam Westhoff (Apr 1878–1960), Find A Grave Memorial no. [76560850](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/76560850), citing Saint Patrick's Catholic Cemetery, Walnut, Crawford County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by RBruchez (contributor [47064355](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/47064355)).

in Neosho County²⁸, and Census records from 1900 puts the location of the Trainor household as the Walnut Grove Township, in Neosho county²⁹.

James Leo Norris was born in Erie in 1892 to **Thomas Joseph Norris (1846-1931)** and **Mary Abigail Dye Norris (1856-1933)**. According to his grave marker at St. Patrick's Cemetery he was a veteran of First World War, however the author has not been able to find more information about his service and more research is needed. Leila P Inman Norris was born in 1893 in Iowa to **Hiram Grant Inman (1869-1921)** and **Lillie Mae Vradenburgh Inman (1869-1903)**. Records are incomplete for Leila, and James, and more research is needed to confirm wedding date and other information about their time together.

Thomas Francis Duling was born to **John F Duling (1857-1932)** and **Kate E. McCarty Duling (1859-1945)** in Kansas, His wedding date to Mary May Hammer Duling is also unknown, he was single in June of 1917 as stated on his draft card.

James Henry Fager was born in St. Paul, Kansas to **William Fager (1860-1923)** and **Sarah Bradshaw Fager in 1902**. He married Genevieve Margarett Crager Fager the daughter of **John Robert Crager (1869-1959)** and **Mary Jane Whalen Crager (1868-1958)** in 1920.

²⁸ "Kansas State Census, 1895", database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/QL8V-MCTY> : 12 November 2017), Margaret Trainor in entry for Richard Trainor, 1895.

²⁹ "United States Census, 1900," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/MMYC-T11> : accessed 25 April 2018), Maggie Trainor in household of Richard Trainor, Walnut Grove Township, Neosho, Kansas, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 159, sheet 9B, family 188, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,240,493.

GENERATION FIVE

A1a1a1. James Westhoff (1837-1913)

A1a1a2. Mary Frances Stephan Westhoff(1836-1901)

A1a1b1. Richard Trainor (1838-1917)

A1a1b2. Mary Riley Trainor (1847-1905)

A1a2a1. Thomas Joseph Norris (1846-1931)

A1a2a2. Mary Abigail Dye Norris (1856-1933)

A1a2b1. Hiram Grant Inman (1869-1921)

A1a2b2. Lillie Mae Vradenburgh Inman (1869-1903)

A1b1a1. John F Duling (1857-1932)

A1b1a2. Kate E. McCarty Duling (1859-1945)

A1b1b1. Edward B Hammer (1868-1946)

A1b1b2. Rosa Mary Matter Hammer (1868-1956)

A1b2a1. William Fager (1860-1923)

A1b2a2. Sarah Bradshaw Fager (1866-1945)

A1b2b1. John Robert Crager (1869-1959)

A1b2b2. Mary Jane Whalen Crager (1868-1958)

James Westhoff has the most complete information of any member of the Kraig Westhoff family in this generation, having a full obituary available. James was the son of **John Adolphus Westhoff (1812-1883)** and **Elizabeth A. Dischkamp (1813-1893)**. From 1864 to 1868 he lived in Iowa moving to Kansas in 1871, he is described here as being of average height, and was a blacksmith. He was considered by those who wrote his obituary to be one of the "Old Settlers", originally living in St. Paul and then moving to farm 5 miles southeast of Walnut. He passed away of sudden heart failure in 1913³⁰. Unfortunately,

³⁰ *Find A Grave*, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 25 April 2018), memorial page for James E. "Jim" Westhoff (21 Nov 1837–6 Apr 1913), Find A Grave Memorial no. [76320098](#), citing Saint

James wife does not have this same level of detail, without any documentation to verify most dates, it is believed that she was born in New York, in 1836, and married James in 1860.

It is worth noting however that James' family that was at this time living in Missouri continued to thrive, **Adolphus D Westhoff (1848-1910)**, had family living in Quincy Illinois, and his daughter was married to Arthur Boll ,misspelled Ball in the newspaper, this warranted the family placing the news in the Monroe City Democrat, for friends in Missouri to see³¹.

The other members of generation five await further geological research.

Patrick's Catholic Cemetery, Walnut, Crawford County, Kansas, USA ; Maintained by RBruchez (contributor [47064355](#)) .

³¹ *Monroe City Democrat*. (Monroe City, Mo.), 03 June 1915. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress. <<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn90061309/1915-06-03/ed-1/seq-4/>>